...THOLICISM THE ...RUE RATIONALISM

...Four Links in a Chain of Reasoning

...REV. F. WOODLOCK, S.J., M.C.

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CATHOLICISM THE TRUE RATIONALISM

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CATHOLICISM THE TRUE RATIONALISM

Or, Four Links in a Chain of Reasoning

By REV. F. WOODLOCK, S.J., M.C.
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CATHOLICISM THE TRUE RATIONALISM

CHAPTER I

Dilemma 1 : *God or No God?*

RATIONALISM is a high-sounding word with pretensions to more than mere intellectual respectability. There is an appeal to human vanity in the very naming of it. It is used as an argument in itself to brand that which is opposed to it as beyond the serious consideration of thinking men. For Rationalism, surely, is connected with reason and reasonableness; and what is higher and more distinctively human in man than his reason? Is not man defined as "a *rational* animal"—neither angel nor brute—"a little less than the angels" in that his intelligence proceeds to the acquisition of knowledge by processes of reason and argument, not as the angelic mind by a flash of intuition; above the brute, because of spiritual powers which transcend sense and its emotions and instincts.

The Rationalist entrenches himself in a strong position when he declares that *he* addresses himself to man's reason, implying, if not directly stating, that the opponents of Rationalism set reason aside and made their appeal to sense and sentiment or unreasonable submission to authority.

The Rationalist has another alluring title for his system. He boasts that he is a "Freethinker," and once again he would enshrine a persuasive argument in a word. For is not freedom man's most prized possession, and is not slavery the antithesis of freedom, and who in this century of emancipations can remain content to be a slave? Surely, then, Rationalism and Free-thought is the only possible intellectual attitude of a reasoning and reasonable man in these days of Liberty and Liberalism. There is a political argument in the mere word Liberalism, and for many there is a theological prejudice begotten by the very titles Rationalism and Free-thought. But what's in a name?

Just as there may be political Liberals whose policy would hamper true liberty—for example, the liberty of a Catholic parent to give a Catholic education to his child—so, perhaps, Rationalism is not as reasonable as it sounds, and Free-thought may be bound fast, enslaved in a bigotry beyond any that the medieval Catholic has been accused of fostering.

"Free-thought"—let us reason about the word a little and expose the veiled fallacy of the phrase. There lived many hundreds of years ago an old Greek philosopher who loved to wander about the market-places and public squares, questioning the

fluent talkers of his time, and by his searching catechism revealing the inconsistencies of their theories. No brawling heckler was he; his manner was suave and inquiring. He just "wanted to know"; he "would like to be told exactly what the speaker meant by his words"; and slowly but inevitably the wrappings were torn off, the masquerade was over, and Error stood naked and shamed before the face of questioning Reason. Would that each platform in these our days had a modern Socrates by it to unmask the impostors that dress up Falsehood in the garb of Truth and lead astray the blind, unthinking, and only half-educated multitude.

"You are a Freethinker?" I can hear him say: "Tell me, is freedom of thought a blessed thing?" "Yea, surely," replies the Freethinker, "freedom is man's greatest blessing. Freedom is prized above all other prerogatives. Do not men and women sometimes starve to death rather than part with their blessed freedom by entering the workhouse? Do not——" But the old man shakes his head, and with a puzzled look of simplicity seems to turn to other matters. "Tell me, do you people value education?" he asks. "Education?" replies the speaker. "Ah! there you are on the topic nearest to my heart: yes, education for all, free education. Does not Liberalism aim at giving

every child a chance? If we had our way poverty would be no bar to progress and success, and every pauper's child would have a university career within its reach. I would——" But once more his period is interrupted. "Yet, when a child learns, is not its freedom hampered by its knowledge?" the old man asks. "No, surely," is the reply, "how can this be?" "Is not the child that escapes from school," continues the questioner, "more free to choose its beliefs than the child that diligently attends its class? To take examples: nine times eight is seventy-two; Queen Elizabeth died in 1603; Montenegro is not south of Greece. Here are three statements of fact. The child that attends school has had its liberty violated three times in learning them. It is no longer free to believe that nine times eight is sixty-four, that Queen Elizabeth died in 1500, or that Montenegro is to the south of Greece. Therefore education enslaves the child and is the enemy of free-thought." "But this cannot be," replies the speaker, "for the freethinker is he who above all else seeks and welcomes the truth. He is bound by no Roman creeds or catechisms, and need not fear to learn the secrets that science teaches." "Methinks, however, that my difficulty remains," insists the old man. "For the only thought that is free is the thought that is not yet bound down by certain

knowledge, and your man is a freethinker only in proportion to his ignorance. Only those ignorant of astronomy are free to think that the earth is bigger than the sun. The most perfect freethinker is he whose mind is deranged, and he who knows most is least free in thought."

There is no need to elaborate the argument. Freedom is not an attribute of thought but of action.

The most perfect thought is that of the most learned men, and the more a man learns the more does he narrow the confines of the world of speculative matters where thought is free only by defect of evidence. Nor can free-thought be thought that is free from the influence of other minds, from the authority of any teacher. If a teacher be reliable and accessible, then ignorance is legitimately expelled and knowledge lawfully acquired by his pupils. It is reasonable to accept knowledge from one who knows; it is folly to repudiate the wisdom that comes of learning from wise teachers. Free-thought is a fallacy. When you meet men who boast of being freethinkers, question them as I have suggested, and you will shame them into admitting that the surest knowledge, after all, is not free but chained to truth, that knowledge which is "free" is no true knowledge but ignorance, or prejudice, or wild hypothesis posing as scientific

fact. If free-thought is folly, so no true Rationalism is opposed to faith.

The Catholic does not set aside his Reason. The Catholic is the true Rationalist in the best sense of the word, for his attitude is one that is eminently reasonable. Reason guides him to the knowledge of God's existence. Reason teaches him that the Gospels are genuine, reliable, historical documents, and it is Reason that convinces him that Christ is the Son of God even as it convinces him that Napoleon was a great leader of men. Nor does Reason stop here, for, examining the message of Him to whom it points as the Divine Messenger, Reason again proclaims a dogmatic Christianity as the necessary outcome of Revelation. And Infallibility itself—the very stumbling-block of the so-called Rationalist—is paradoxically approved as the truly necessary and reasonable condition of faith.

Thus Reason is the Catholic's guide which steers the soul o'er waters where its knowledge holds sway, and finally in relinquishing the helm places it in the hands of the Divine Pilot, of Him whose authority it is reasonable to accept, for He neither is deceived nor can He wish to deceive. If it is not opposed to Rationalism for a child to learn from its teacher in school, still less is it opposed to Reason for man to learn at the feet of the Incarnate

Word of God, from the lips of the Divine Teacher who is Himself the Infinite Wisdom.

Let us turn now to the first problem that confronts the Rationalist—the problem of the existence of God. Let us forge our first link in the chain of reasoning which is to show that the Catholic is, after all, the true Rationalist.

Is it reasonable to believe in God, or must a Rationalist be an Atheist, a Materialist, or an Agnostic?

There are few who openly and blatantly deny the existence of God. Alas! there are many who live without any thought of Him, who live as though there were no God, though they do not affirm, even in the secrecy of their hearts, "there *is* no God." They are practical if not theoretical Atheists. But if there be few who deny God's existence, the number of Agnostics—of men who declare the human mind incapable of solving the question of His existence—is increasing with terrible rapidity.

This Agnosticism is due intellectually either to a false psychology, which unseats Reason in the name of Rationalism and limits man's mental processes to sense perception, or to a false supposition that God, if He exists, is so utterly incomprehensible that even the fact of His existence is beyond man's certain knowledge. But we must not admit that

the human mind is so incapable. It is the obvious function of Reason to deduce, from visible effects, invisible causes adequate to the production of these effects. Though God's nature cannot be perfectly comprehended by a finite mind, many truths concerning God can be reached by human reason working on the data of science and experience.

Science itself so proceeds, and Rationalism does not condemn science. It is Reason that convinces the scientist of the existence of the force of gravitation, of electricity, of ether, and many other invisible causes which account for the visible effects the scientist loves to study. And let us not forget that science too has its mysteries. It does not deny life because its processes are mysterious. It admits of the existence of electricity though the nature of electricity baffles its intelligence.

The man who refuses to believe in God's existence as long as the nature of God continues mysterious and beyond our full comprehension is as a child who would refuse to believe in the existence of force because he had never seen force but only argued to it from its effects, or who would deny growth to plants because the mystery of life is unexplained. As the falling apple proved the existence of the force of gravitation, so this visible universe proves the existence of God.

God alone explains the universe, and it is Reason

itself that furnishes this explanation. Let us look at the physical argument. What does science tell us of the world? The great universe is dying. No matter how unimaginably great its extent it is not infinite. The energy that penetrates it in all its forms is a finite and a constant quantity. Heat is radiated in all directions, and the heat given out is not restored to its source. As the sun is cooling rapidly, so the entire universe of which it is but a small part is cooling. It is moving to that which eventually it must reach, a condition of heat equilibrium—of physical death. Give it time—even though that time has to be measured in myriads of years—give it time and it will die. It is not dead yet, merely because it has not had enough time to cool—to reach by its radiating processes a stage of thermal equilibrium.

But had the universe existed from eternity it would have had an infinite duration in which to reach any assignable stage of growth or decay. Therefore our universe is not eternal. Therefore it had a beginning. Therefore it once did not exist. Leap back in imagination to that time. Picture the dark emptiness of Absolute Void. Whence came the world which once did not exist? Reason tells us it once began to be. That same Reason proclaims that it must have had a Cause capable of bringing it into existence.

The principle of causality is one of Reason's own dogmas. The human mind is forced to admit that anything which begins to be, must be caused by something which already exists and which is capable of producing it. A Creator able to bring into existence this vast universe therefore exists, and a Creator who creates *freely*; for if His action is necessary it must be eternal, and we have already proved that the universe is not eternal. It is right to speak of His action, for free action must be personal. We are, perhaps, bewildered by the size of the universe and by the ages that have gone by during its lifetime, but the problem is seen by Reason and proclaimed by science to be the same on a large scale as that of a piece of ice in a glass of water or a candle flame just guttering to its extinction. We see the ice melting but not yet finally gone, we see the flame flickering to its end, and Reason tells us that neither the ice has been eternally in the glass nor has the flame been burning for ever. Only a little time more, and the ice and flame will be gone. Had they *per impossibile* existed from eternity, they would have disappeared before we existed to study them, for the actual duration of any changing thing must at any moment be finite, viewed retrospectively. It must begin in time, and cannot be from eternity.

If the universe did not exist once and now does

exist, there necessarily has been some eternal uncaused Cause in existence, for if at any time there was Nothing—dark, void, absolute Nothing—Reason forces us to recognize that there never could be anything in existence. The wildest evolutionist could not state that evolution started in a void. The materialist is satisfied with peering into the gloom of the ages that have gone and tracing backwards into the dim past the history of the universe. The evolutionist declares himself able to explain the world of to-day if he be allowed to trace up link by link the chain of cause and effect as far only as a primeval nebula of atoms whirling around through space and cooling by definite physical and chemical laws into our present system of stars and planets and earth. But he frankly admits that his chain of causes and effects cannot be infinite in length, and with equal frankness he must declare that his explanation is incomplete and unreasonable if proposed as a complete history of reality.

The origin of matter he cannot explain, nor, in spite of the wild, unscientific guesses of certain materialists, can life originate save from living matter or by special creation. As to the origin of matter, let me quote the words of Tyndall: "If you ask the Materialist whence is the matter of which we have been discoursing he has no answer.

Science is mute in regard to such questions." Huxley agrees with him when he says: "The scientific investigator is wholly incompetent to say anything at all about the first origin of the material universe."

And yet we have men like Vogt declaring: "The Creator must be put out-of-doors unceremoniously, and we cannot allow the least room for the operations of such a being"; and the apostate McCabe: "Belief in God and immortality scientific evidence has wholly disproved."

But Reason refuses to be satisfied with this. It recognizes that the principle of causality is of universal application, and it demands a First Cause—a Cause which is Itself uncaused and self-existent—as the ultimate explanation of the series of causes which are at the same time effects. The chain of dependent causes must be supported. It is of finite length, and the explanation why each link hangs is incomplete till the first support of creation is acknowledged, an independent, self-existent Being, God the Creator of heaven and earth.

When then Professor Schaffer in his presidential address to the British Association says "The study of Natural knowledge is never properly advanced if mixed up with 'the supernatural,' or if metaphysics is appealed to for the

explanation of scientific problems," and "It behoves us to eliminate all considerations involving the intervention of supernatural agencies," he is himself unscientific and unreasonable. His language is parallel to that of Huxley, who declares that miracles are impossible because they would be supernatural, and the supernatural is impossible because there is nothing above or outside Nature.

But the long roll of names honoured in the world of science, names of men who believe in God and whose belief does not conflict with their scientific eminence, is an answer to these unreasonable statements. Let me quote a sentence of Lord Kelvin's: "If you think strongly enough, you will be forced by science to believe in God. You will find science not antagonistic but helpful to religion. Science positively affirms creating and directive power which she compels us to accept." "In whatever direction we pursue our researches we discover clear proofs of a creative intelligence and of its wisdom, foresight, and power," says Sir Charles Lyell, the eminent geologist. Letters from over a hundred eminent scientists were received and edited under the title "Religious Beliefs of Scientists," and their unanimous decision is that science is not opposed to belief in a Creator.

Even if it were ever proved that life could originate from lifeless matter—and the whole of scientific evidence is opposed to such an hypothesis—the origin of matter itself remains unexplained. It is only such Materialists as are also Atheists that prove to themselves that life arose from dead matter by the obvious fallacy of a *petitio principii*. Life did not once exist: only matter existed, and everything that now exists came from dead matter; therefore life also came from dead matter, they would argue.

It is, then, useless to appeal to any evolutionary hypothesis as a substitute for belief in a Creator. The arrangement of atoms in the primeval nebula requires explanation as well as the existence of the nebula itself. The action of a marvellous wisdom is manifest in Nature. Every branch of physical science cries aloud in admiration of the wonders of design manifested in the reign of law throughout the world, and with Charles Darwin the thinking mind is constrained to say: "It is impossible to conceive that this grand and wondrous universe arose through chance." With Rousseau we exclaim: "I perceive God in His works."

But passing from the lower manifestations of creation to the higher, we are forced to recognize in man—the king of creation—powers and activities which transcend material forces. Professor

Schaffer erred obviously when he declared that "the problems of life are essentially problems of matter," and that "living beings are governed by laws identical with those which govern inanimate matter." Surely the higher intellectual processes of man and the exercise of his free will stand apart from and are not subject to chemical and physical laws. You cannot analyze an act of self-denial by a chemical formula, nor weigh a deliberate choice in ounces or grammes. Intelligence and free will demand their creator. They are facts, and no material explanation of them suffices. An intelligent and free God, their Cause and Creator, is demanded by reason itself, and he is the true Rationalist who fears not to accept the consequence of his premises.

Other arguments prove the reasonableness of belief in God, the moral universality of such a belief, the existence of conscience, and the religious instinct which, as a natural phenomenon, demands a reasonable explanation.

What, then, of the dilemma "God or no God"? Reason refuses to ratify the atheistic chaos. In the name of her laws of thought, compelling and evident, she proclaims the existence of an eternal and self-existent Cause, which contains within Itself all conceivable perfections. Free, intelligent, personal, the Creator should be worshipped and

obeyed by all His rational creatures. From Him they come, on Him they rest, in Him they live and move and have their being, towards Him they tend. "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God, and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee."

CHAPTER II

Dilemma 2: *Christian or Unitarian?*

THE writer remembers some surprise being shown on a certain occasion when the expression "Christian or Unitarian?" was proposed as a religious dilemma.

"Christian *or* Unitarian? Why, surely very many Unitarians are just as good Christians as Catholics," was the comment made by a Unitarian. Just as it was necessary to justify "Theist or Atheist" as a dilemma by showing that the position of an Agnostic was for all practical purposes of religion equivalent to that of the Atheist, so it may be necessary, before approaching the proofs of the Divinity of Christ, to make it clear that a Unitarian cannot be a Christian; that the minimum distinctive belief of a Christian excludes an essential tenet of the Unitarian. Indeed, we shall sadly have to admit that a certain number of so-called Christians of the newest theological views have logically lost their right to the name of Christian in accepting the tenets of modernist Christianity. In a word, that "Christian or Unitarian?" is a dilemma to be faced when Atheism has been set aside.

No man can be a Christian who denies the Divinity of Christ. No Unitarian admits that Christ is God, the Second Person of the Blessed

Trinity; therefore no Christian can be a Unitarian and no Unitarian a Christian. The terms are mutually exclusive, and one or the other of them may be applied to every theist.

Again, take the words "A Christian and a Gentleman." These words are not synonyms. A Christian should be a gentleman in the true sense of the word. Kind, unselfish, well-mannered, fearful of causing pain to others, honest, philanthropic, acting habitually on principle and for worthy motives, without human respect, free from foolish vanity or harsh pride—all this should a man be, to be a perfect gentleman. But this is not of itself enough to make a man a Christian. The virtues he may show in his life may be natural virtues which Christ has praised and good Christians of every age have practised, but these virtues do not give him yet the right to the name of Christian.

Not every philosopher or golf player can be politically described as a follower of Mr. Balfour, nor would a mere devotion to orchid culture have justified us even from an election platform in calling a candidate a "Chamberlainite." As the Tariff Reformer and Free Trader might not claim the same political leader for their own unless they agreed with and were ready to follow that leader in his main policy, so in matters of religious belief none may fairly call themselves Christian if they be

unwilling to accept Christ's own doctrine about Himself.

If Christ claimed to be God, if Christ was God, then none can call themselves Christian who refuse to bow down in absolute adoration of the Babe of Bethlehem as their Creator and Judge and Lord. That Christ claimed to be God and that Christ was God I shall prove, not because most of my readers have any doubt of that fact, but because in these days and in this country they need for the sake of others, if not for their own sakes, to have ready a reason for the faith that is in them.

It is obviously impossible here to do more than sketch out very briefly the lines of proof that are followed by the student to show that reason justifies our acceptance of the Gospels as genuine historical documents. It is true to say that there is not one-fifth of the proof available for the authenticity of classical literature and histories that exists for the authenticity and reliability of these Christian records. Not merely are the extant manuscripts of the Gospels much older than those of the writings of Cæsar, Cicero, Tacitus, Herodotus, and other classics which are accepted universally as genuine, but the multiplied independent quotations from these Gospels in the earliest Christian writers testify to the world-wide spread of copies of the Sacred Books and the extraordinary fidelity of the

copyists whose lives were occupied in the transcription of the New Testament for the various Christian congregations.

St. Paul writes a letter to the Corinthians or Ephesians, and at once the Christians of other churches beg and obtain a word-for-word copy of the precious document. Irenæus was a disciple of Polycarp: Polycarp sat at the feet of John, who had laid his head upon the breast of Jesus. What does Irenæus tell us? "I could describe the very place where Polycarp sat while speaking, and all he related of his intercourse with John and the other Apostles who had seen the Lord, and what he said of their discourses, and all he had heard from them about the Lord and His miracles and His teaching." Irenæus tells us that in his day "the Church, which was established all over the world, rests on the Four Gospels, as on so many pillars." This same Irenæus, who, as has been well said, was as near to the Apostles as you are to your grandfather, thus testifies to the widespread acceptance and evident authority of the Gospels. Of the Apostolic Fathers who lived in personal intercourse with the Apostles we have not many writings, yet in the few pages that have come down to us there are over four hundred quotations from the New Testament.

It would be more reasonable to deny that Cæsar

and Cicero ever lived at Rome than to refuse to accept the Gospels as contemporary records of the words and works of Christ. Before the second century of the Christian era there existed certainly a Syriac—the "Pechito," or "faithful"—and a Latin—the "Itala"—translation of the Bible, officially approved and generally accepted in East and West. The extraordinary reverence for the Scriptures, the scrupulous care lest a word be changed in them, which characterized the early ages, are facts which lie on the face of early ecclesiastical history, and they help to show us the impossibility of foisting false Scriptures on the Church or altering the written word of the Apostles. The very enemies of the Christians, while eagerly seeking to hunt out and destroy the sacred scrolls, do not attempt to deny their authenticity.

If critics of a later age have tried to do away with the trustworthiness of the records, they have been obliged finally to do so, not on grounds of legitimate criticism, but because of a preconceived idea that the occurrences narrated in the Gospels are impossible.

Harnack has had to go back step by step in the matter of the chronology of the New Testament books, till he finds himself obliged to admit that the old tradition is substantially correct. Strauss is

thus set aside by his own, and the mythical theory of the Tuebingen school of critics loses its only possible support. Renan boldly expresses his principle of criticism in the following words: "That which guides us in the difficult paths of criticism is the principle, for us indisputable, that the supernatural is impossible. We do not discuss the supernatural, for it is impossible." Again, he tells us: "The denial of the supernatural has become an absolute dogma for every cultivated mind." Harnack with him at the present stage of his criticism denies that there can be such things as miracles. Later historical writers adopt the same principle and frankly avow it. "What must we do in the face of a miraculous fact? For the historian the solution is evident. We must reject the miraculous without examining it, having stamped it with the brand of contempt—Impossible." Hence Hegel wrote a life of Christ which from beginning to end simply ignored the miraculous. More modern writers have imitated him. But it is not as critics that they reject the miraculous. It is as philosophers who are prejudiced by an obstinate and ungrounded belief that miracles cannot happen.

Their unphilosophic dogmatism against miracles really hampers their criticism. Yet, if Christ was God, Christ could work miracles, and a true history

of Christ must give an account of them. John Stuart Mill admits this when he says: "Once admit a God and the production of an effect by His direct will must be reckoned with as a serious possibility."

The Gospels are critically inexplicable if we reject miracles. A world without a Creator is a greater mystery and more unthinkable than a world created by God. So, also, a widely accepted Gospel written by Christ's contemporaries and followers, giving a true account of miracles worked by the Son of God is less mysterious, less incredible than the impossible supposition of a world welcoming foolish forgeries filled with accounts of things that never took place.

"The fishermen of Galilee, still less the early Christian writers, could not have invented the sayings ascribed to Jesus or imagined the character and life revealed in the Gospels," is the opinion of John Stuart Mill, an opinion that is shared by every unprejudiced student.

We may rely on the Gospels. Reason hands them to us, true criticism approves them, and all we have to do is to take up and read. "Tolle, lege!"

What do the Gospels tell us of Christ? They tell us of a Man who was eminently perfect in character—in word and deed. None deny that the

person of Christ is the most winning and admirable in all history. The sublimity of His ethical doctrine is admittedly without parallel in moral philosophy, and the greatness of His work in the world beyond compare with that of other men. A great man may change the map of Europe or build up the prosperity and social well-being of an empire, but Christ civilized a brutal world, and Christian principles and ideals raised degraded mankind to a place in creation worthy of his nature—nay, above it. Christ is not one of a group—He is unique. "I know men," Napoleon is alleged to have said, "and Christ is more than man." "If the life and death of Socrates be those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus Christ are those of a God," was the admission of Rousseau.

The argument I wish to put briefly before you is this. It is an old one, but its force has never been diminished by criticism, its power to produce conviction has never waxed feeble with its age. Christ, the greatest and best and most truthful and least fanatical of the world's great religious leaders, claimed to be God; therefore Christ was God. Or, more shortly: If Christ was not God, then He was neither good nor wise. Or again: Christ was either God or He was an impostor or madman.

Let us make sure of Christ's claim. In Isaias we read: "The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our

Lawgiver, the Lord is our King." Jahweh—the great God of Israel is all this. Judge, Lawgiver, and King. And a young prophet of Israel came and claimed that He was the King, Lawgiver, and Judge of mankind—not of Israel alone, but of the whole race of Adam, Jew and Gentile. Could a mere man claim this without claiming to be God? It were patent blasphemy for a mere man to lay such a claim. The Jews who listened to Christ worshipped the God who gave commands from Sinai. And Christ calmly quotes the word of the Commandment, and, placing Himself on an equality with Him who spoke from the cloud in the thunder to Moses, continues: "But *I* say to you," adding to the Law on His own authority. Therefore in that act He claimed to be God.

King He asserted Himself to be in all the reiterated preaching of the Kingdom. It is not necessary to labour the point. But as Judge still more clearly does He assert a divine prerogative. He forgives sins—and does so by His own authority. The bystanders are scandalized by His assumption, and He works a great miracle of healing to prove His power to cure the hidden leprosy and paralysis and death of the soul—which is sin.

As Lord of heaven and earth, He tells His hearers that He will come in power and majesty to

judge. "Then shall He sit in the seat of His majesty, and all nations shall be gathered together before Him, and He shall separate them one from another," is His prophecy of the Last Day. If Christ be not God, then, according to Christ's teaching, God, who has been offended by sin, is set aside in the day of reckoning, and man judges man and man condemns the sinner and gives heaven to the holy.

These assumptions of the power to give laws, to forgive sins, and to judge mankind, are a proof that Christ regarded Himself as the Son of God. But He claimed it explicitly—and that in the most solemn moment of His trial before the rulers of His nation. See Christ before the chief priests, listen to the witnesses contradicting each other, watch the evident annoyance of Caiphas, and now hear his question addressed to the Prisoner before him: "I adjure You by the living God, tell us if Thou be the Son of the Blessed God." "Thou hast said it, I am," is the reply of Christ. "You shall see the Son of Man coming in majesty and in the clouds to judge mankind."

This was no mere claim to be the Messias or a prophet of God, and the priests knew it. The garment of the chief priest is rent in hypocritical horror. "What need have we of witnesses! You yourselves have heard the blasphemy." "We have

a law, and He must die because He made Himself the Son of God." "Thou being a man makest Thyself God." True, He made Himself out to be God! In the solemn hour of His trial Christ proclaims His divinity. He dies for that central truth of Christianity. He dies because He claimed to be God. The only explanation of His life and preaching is found in the revelation of His personality: "Before Abraham was, I am." Christ claimed to be the Eternal God! But Christ was no impostor, nor was He a madman. Therefore Christ *is* God. Neither the inference nor the premise needs elaboration. No one who looks at the Gospel record can for a moment suggest that Christ was either insincere or mad. Yet either the one or the other must He have been if He made this stupendous claim without a due title to it.

When St. John the Baptist was in prison he sent two of his disciples to ask Christ: "Art Thou He that is to come, or must we look for another?" Christ's answer referred them to the well-known prophecy in Isaiah: "God Himself will come and will save you. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free" (Isa. xxxv. 4-7).

Yes, God Himself had come when the Babe of Bethlehem was born.

The well-established fact of Christ's Resurrection proves His divinity—for He had claimed that He would raise Himself by His own power, and He did so. Rightly did Thomas, the doubter, fall at His feet in adoration with the clear words of worship on his lips: "My Lord and my God!"

It is precisely because of the divine egoism of Christ, because He drew all men to Himself and claimed their personal devotion and loyalty and obedience and utter submission, that Comte—the high priest of Positivism—excludes Him from a place in his Pantheon among the benefactors of humanity. The Altruism of the new religion was so essential in Comte's eyes that the greatest Benefactor of Humanity is banished from the calendar where the names of those who loved and served their fellow-men are chronicled for worship, because, while loving and serving His fellow-men, He claimed to be their Creator and Lord. St. Paul finds a place in the Pantheon of humanity because he pointed to another and preached Christ and bade men find salvation in Him. Christ is excluded because He preached Himself.

So Christ is God, and Christ risen from the dead is a living Christ. We need not dwell on metaphysical subtleties as to the nature of a union which kept the double natures of Christ distinct but united in one Personality. Christ is God—so He

knows me through and through and loves me and died for me and thought of me as He preached and worked miracles and prayed on the mountain-top and agonized in the garden and hung upon the Cross. I am worth something, for God came after me from heaven and trod the rough, thorny paths of the desert of life seeking me, a lost sheep of His fold. I am much to Christ; then let Christ be all in all to me.

Professor Jowett thought it impossible to feel a personal attachment to Christ. He thought it contrary to human nature to feel this for one who, he says, is scarcely known to us and lived nineteen hundred years ago. But Christ lives to-day, and Christ thought of me throughout His life nineteen hundred years ago. He calls to me, not across the seas and through the centuries, but here and now, in His churches and in my heart. With Thomas we can fall at His feet and worship Him. "My Lord and my God"—yea, Lord, and since You so permit it, my Friend, my Hope, my Strength, and my Reward exceeding great.

CHAPTER III

Dilemma 3: Dogma or No Dogma?

SOME of the popularity of undenominationalism is undoubtedly due to the fact that it has no dogma and insists on no creed. Freethought in religion is the cry of modern times. Dogma leads to bigotry and bigotry to intolerance, and these are things eminently undesirable in an enlightened age when universal education trains every mind, so we are told, to form its own opinions and judge for itself of truth.

Outside the Catholic Church it is becoming more true every day to say that dogma is dead. Whether dogma is logically possible outside the Catholic Church is a question that we shall have to discuss. Here the dilemma proposed by our reason—for remember, we are examining the rational basis of our faith—is "Dogma or no dogma? Should a Christian Church be dogmatic or should it not?"

We are dealing with the Christian religion. In two previous chapters we saw that reason justifies our acceptance of Theism by proving the existence of God. Reason also bids us accept the Divinity of Christ and become Christians in the true sense of the word—that is, followers of Christ who accept His own account of Himself, and who worship

Him as God made man for our salvation. Must we, as Christians, accept all His doctrines?

Did He teach? Can we know what He taught? Did He insist on our believing what He taught? Can any be truly Christians who do not accept His doctrines? These are questions the solution of which helps us to answer our dilemma. And first, let us ask ourselves again: Is Rationalism necessarily opposed to Dogma?

Rationalism is a system that prides itself on bringing all truth to the test of human reason. It is not, however, a system that rejects all partial truths because of its inability to comprehend all that is involved in them. Were this so, it would be hampered in its belief of practically every simple fact that falls under the observation of sense. The grass grows, and the flowers are painted in brilliant hues by processes of life which are beyond reason's power to penetrate. The facts we know; the explanation of the facts lies hidden. Science can apply that marvellous force, electricity, and turn it to the service of mankind; but what it is in itself is a mystery. Yes! there we have the word. Reason must admit the existence of natural mysteries, "truths beyond it which it is unable to explain, but of which it unhesitatingly admits the existence." Rationalism is not impatient of partial truth and of an admixture of mystery outside religious matters,

but it is said to rise indignantly to repel any claim to consideration made by religious truths which are mysterious.

Reason, too, instead of rebelling against authority in belief, forces us to accept reliable authority as the source of most of our certain knowledge. Now, whenever we accept a truth on the authority of another, that truth is a dogma—a thing taught. The dogmas of natural knowledge are numberless; they are the chief part of the great complexus of truth that the mind uses and contemplates; and the mind of the Rationalist and Freethinker bows to as many dogmas of the natural order, and makes as many acts of human faith, as the Catholic. But the question for us to discuss is the reasonableness of accepting authority not only in matters of general information, but in matters of religion.

Was Christ a dogmatist? If so, Christians must accept dogma. Christ is God; therefore He was able to teach, and His authority as a teacher must be supreme. If ever it be reasonable to accept the word of another, it is surely reasonable to accept the word of God, and Christ has proved His Divinity by His words and works so efficaciously that Reason bids us accept that Divinity as a fact.

That Christ came as a teacher of men is one of the evident truths that are forced on our mind by

the perusal of the Gospels. "For this was I born, for this came I into the world, to bear testimony to the truth," is His declaration to Pilate. "I am the Truth" was another of His revelations about Himself. Christ was "the Life of men," but He was their life communicated to them through the saving and living knowledge of the Truth. He taught about Himself, about His Father, about sin and His atonement for the sins of men. He taught of a judgment to come, of a separation of the good from the wicked by Himself on that Day of Judgment. He taught clearly and emphatically that the wicked would be punished eternally in a place of suffering, while the good would reign eternally with Him in His Kingdom of Heaven.

He taught "not as the scribes and Pharisees," but as one having authority to teach, and when He gathered His Apostles around Him and sent them forth into the world—the nucleus of His Church—He bade them go and teach in His name. "Go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature, teaching them to observe *all* the things whatsoever I have commanded you." He promised to strengthen their minds by the gift of Pentecost. The Holy Ghost would come and "teach them all truth," to fit them for their work as Apostles. He shared His authority with them, or rather communicated it so perfectly that He

declared: "He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me." His Church was the "Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of Truth."

Finally, He made the acceptance of His truth obligatory on mankind. Christ was intolerant of error: "They that believe shall be saved, and they that believe not shall be condemned." Here we have the attitude of Christ towards dogma. He is a dogmatist Himself in that He teaches truths and insists on the importance of their being believed. "Dogma or no dogma?" for the true Christian is answered by the words of Christ: "They that believe not shall be condemned." The dogmatism of Christ is faithfully imitated by his followers. They understood the meaning of those words, "*Go and teach*," and teach they certainly did.

At the present day it is only the Catholic Church that teaches with authority, and, strange to say, Christian sects do not recognize that her divine dogmatism is a mark of her fidelity to the task imposed on her by Christ when He founded her.

Outside the Catholic Church the pulpit is the place whence individual speakers express their own particular views and opinions. The members of the congregation accept or reject these views as they prefer. They may differ from the doctrines held by the minister, for they have been given by

their Church what Christ denied to His followers—namely, the right of private judgment, the right to pick and choose their beliefs according to their individual taste. Ministers of the same Church differ among themselves, and from their Bishops, if they have any. The Bishops in turn have varied views on important points of doctrine. Some hold to seven sacraments and others to two. Some hold that Christ is present really in the Eucharist, and others that He is really absent. There is a wide tolerance of opinion outside the Catholic Church because outside the Catholic Church there is no teaching Church, no Church that insists on belief in her dogmas. There has not been much change since Bishop Ryle, the Protestant Bishop of Liverpool, forty years ago, declared that "things have come to such a pass that it does not appear to matter a jot what a clergyman holds or believes." The modernist clergymen at Cambridge in 1921 rejected, unrebuked by their Bishops, most of the supernatural facts of the Creed they were pledged as Christians to recite. And what is true of the clergy is still more universally true of the laity.

When, in these times, men praise the increased spirit of tolerance, and what they call the absence of bigotry in the world of to-day, they do not always realize that this tolerance is the outcome of religious indifference in the matter of belief. They forget

Christ's insistence on the necessity of belief and His stern words of condemnation for those who refuse to believe. St. Paul would be singularly out of place in a modern undenominational pulpit. His rough dogmatism would be very unpalatable to the modern eclectic Churchman or Nonconformist. Were he to repeat in St. Paul's Cathedral to-day words he used in the early days of Christianity, he would alienate the sympathies of his flock so effectually that he would be invited to seek another pulpit for his denunciations against those who differed from him. "If even an angel from heaven preach other doctrine than that which I have declared to you, let him be anathema!" would sound strange words on the lips of any modern teacher of religion.

So wide has this indifference to doctrinal orthodoxy become that faith in the sense of certain knowledge is becoming less common in the world, even where the practice of an external worship continues. "Are you sure?" we may ask a friend about some matter, and we may get as a reply: "I don't know for certain, but I believe so." It is a significant fact that, as a result of Protestantism in England, the word "belief" has come to be used of our opinions or probable conjectures, whereas belief or faith should be applied to certain knowledge when that knowledge is not acquired by our

own observation but through reliable information obtained from those whose word we trust. Credo, I believe—that is, I know for certain because my informant is well informed and truthful. Christian faith must be sure, for we cling to our beliefs on the authority of Christ, who, as God, neither will nor can deceive us.

What matter, then, if Christ reveal truths to us which we cannot fully grasp—because of the nature of those truths and because of the limitations of our finite intellect? It is reasonable to give a whole-hearted assent to His revelation, even as it is reasonable for a child to trust its father when he tells it of the wonders of nature and science, the full comprehension of which is at present beyond its childish capacity. A child who would refuse to believe his father telling him that instruments existed which would enable it to hear his voice over hundreds of miles of distance or years after he was dead and buried because neither the telephone nor gramophone had come within its young experience, would show little love and trust in its father's wisdom or truthfulness. Many of the puzzles of religion are only incomprehensible to us here and now. Hereafter the solution will be clear. But Christ demands that here and now we should give Him the worship involved in our faith, the "service of our reason," accepting as true what we

cannot yet understand, because He has told us and we believe His word.

There is a worship in faith which makes it especially pleasing to God. The highest of God's creatures is the intellectual being, and as pride of intellect is a rebellion against God and the degradation of the created mind, so the humility of faith is its highest perfection. No progress of science or advance in education can save the human race from intellectual darkness, and decay, if that progress is accompanied by the loss of faith and the consequent blindness with regard to those truths of the other world which the unaided intellect could never attain to.

What wonder, then, that the Catholic Church lays stress on the dogmas of her faith. To-day the words of her Founder are still ringing in her ears: "Go and teach all nations . . . teach them all things. He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me. They that believe not shall be condemned." What wonder that she stands at bay defending the faith of the little ones of her flock, insisting that they shall have the Truth—the definite dogmatic Truth that Christ gave her—a Truth that is worth all the wisdom of the world, a pearl of great price! What wonder that Catholics have made such sacrifices to see that their children shall share in the blessing of a Catholic

education, which they themselves received through God's good Providence! What wonder that the vague generalities of an undenominational religious training are rejected with scorn.

Christ taught, therefore Christians can have dogmas. Christ commanded us to believe, therefore we *must* have dogmas of the Faith. Freethought would be all very well if Christ had not come and spoken. The pagan philosopher Plato sketches for us the best that we can do without a revelation. "A man must needs take the best and most irrefragable of human theories . . . unless he can find some word of God which shall more securely and surely carry him through life."

The Word of God was made flesh; the Wisdom of the Father became incarnate. He spoke and preached and taught and saw to it that we of later ages might hear His Word echoing down to us through the centuries. We have, then, a Word of God. Reason approves of our believing God's Word; therefore reason should set its mark of approval on a dogmatic Christianity. Reason leads us to Christ and repeats the words that were spoken by the Father: "Hear ye Him." A genuine Rationalism approves of Christian dogmatism.

CHAPTER IV

Dilemma 4: Catholic or Protestant?

A CLEAR-HEADED Catholic, who is convinced of the reasonableness of his own religion, may sometimes find it hard to believe that his friends remain Protestants through conscientious conviction. For the instructed Catholic the links of the chain of argument are so strongly welded and the logical conclusion so cogently drawn that he is tempted to judge unkindly those whose Christianity is so different from his own.

After all, it is almost impossible for the Catholic to picture for himself the mind of the non-Catholic. Educational influences, generally accepted axioms of the religious world in which they have grown up, that very real but indescribable something which is called the Protestant atmosphere—all this and much beside has gone to forming a strong prejudice against Rome and its teachings and doings. The story-books of the Sunday school had little passages in them that conveyed their warning lesson. The funereal aspect that was at once adopted by all when the news of the sad perversion of some Protestant who "went over to Rome" was discussed in the family circle and the kind of comment that was made to explain the fall—all this has

helped. That Rome should be right and the Protestantism of good old England be wrong has come to be unthinkable: nor can a few syllogisms strung together produce much impression on this life-long conviction of the mind. Bigotry has done its work steadily in England for nigh four centuries, and a concentrated appeal to reason is not of much avail against it. That is why the Church does not rely on controversy to make converts.

She knows that her reasons are valid and that she alone can stand unshaken by any attack made in the name of logic. But she relies chiefly on the calm exposition of the truth which she exists to teach. Some who have heard false accounts of the horrible nature of her moral teaching and the absurdity of her dogmas timidly enter her places of worship and find out for themselves that what is said against her is a libel and a lie. The holiness of her doctrine, her condemnation of sin, her clear teaching that never may the smallest sin be committed even to gain all the world, is a revelation to them of the purity and beauty of her ethical standard. The marvellous consistency of her dogmatic teaching about God and the Incarnation and Atonement and Sacramental system and the Bible, convinces them that she has the One Truth—if truth there be in Christianity.

"I am convinced," said Dean Stanley, "that

Protestantism treats Catholics with shameful ignorance and unfairness." Mallock has said on the same subject: "If we would obtain a true view of the general characteristics of Catholicism we must begin by making a clean sweep of all the views that, as outsiders, we have been taught to entertain about her." The great American humorist, Mark Twain, wrote in all seriousness: "I have been educated to enmity towards everything Catholic, and sometimes in consequence of this I find it easier to discover Catholic faults than Catholic merits." Education does much to fix a man's point of outlook on life, and no beliefs are so hard to lay aside as those which are the result of the consistent teaching of those we loved and reverenced in childhood and youth. The barriers of ignorance and prejudice hedge in the mind and keep it back from the approach of Truth, and the breaking down of those barriers takes time. God's grace is needed, and prayer for guidance and light will help more than hours of religious wrangling. "Non in dialectica"—not by logic has Christ saved the world and brought His truth to souls. Christian truth will stand the test of logic, but seldom, if ever, does mere argument lead men to change their whole outlook on religion or any other matter of deep human interest and vital importance.

And now, before turning to the last dilemma which we have to consider, let me in a word remind

you of the progress we have made. Our purpose in this pamphlet is to meet the objection against Catholicism that it is opposed to Rationalism—Rationalism being the system which accepts such truth and such truth only as commends itself to human reason.

We are meeting this objection by showing that reason not only does not destroy the claims of Catholicism but itself commends them: that therefore the real Rationalism in Religion does not deny the supernatural but admits it on the strength of the evidence which exists to prove it. "There is a God": "Christ is God": "Christ established a dogmatic Church" are all truths which have commended themselves to our reason.

We are now to examine at the bar of that same arbiter the conflicting claims of Protestantism and the Catholic Church.

Both cannot be right—for they repudiate each other. Indeed, the Catholic Church's claim is so exclusive that it is impossible to patch up any compromise between her and her opponent. "I am the Church of Christ and the *only* one whom He commissioned to teach in His name and with His authority. I was with Him in Galilee. I saw Him risen from the tomb. To *me* He said 'Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven.' To *me* the words were addressed: 'Do this in commemoration

of Me.' To *me* He gave the Spirit of Truth, and He and that Spirit are with me and will be with me —so He promised whose promises are true—all days to the end of the world. I am the Church He built upon Peter the Rock. I have lived nigh two thousand years, but the strength and beauty of youth are still mine. Bigotry, hatred, heresy, schism, persecution, have all risen up against me, but none have availed, and when the lifetime of the world draws to its close I shall still be on earth faithful to the task He left me when He ascended into heaven from the mountain-top in Judea. He left me to teach, and when He comes to judge He shall find me teaching '*all* the things whatsoever He commanded.' Heaven and earth shall pass away—but I shall not pass away, for I live in the strength of His promise and my immortality is assured." The daring self-assurance of such claims as these does not admit of compromise.

"Catholic or Protestant?" is an irreconcilable dilemma. There are many ways in which the solution of this problem is sought and by the help of God's grace found in the approval of the Catholic claim.

In a book called "Roads to Rome," published some years ago, are collected the personal narratives of a large number of converts, analyzing the mental processes which were the preamble to the final act of

faith in the Church and her teaching. The transparent earnestness of purpose revealed in these narratives, the evident sacrifices these men and women had to make, in many cases having to leave all in following Christ's guidance, is in itself a probable argument for the truth of that Church they finally entered. The happiness and peace and joy obtained by their fidelity to grace is evidently the reward of the sacrifices they made and again convinces us that they did right.

The Record of the Papacy as revealed in the study of History and the patristic literature led on some; the recognition that the Catholic Church alone bears the marks of the true Church as described in the Gospels convinced others. The wonderful unity in belief and submission to authority, especially when viewed in contrast with the hopeless doctrinal disunion and chaotic anarchy in other Christian Churches, has helped to settle the point for many inquirers. A simple fact, but one that has been so much obscured by the bold "bluff" of some Protestant writers, namely that all other Christian Churches had evidently a human origin—as human as the origin of Mahomedanism—is borne in upon others, and the creation of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth loses the power to masquerade in their mind as a Church founded by Christ. They realize, what we see so clearly, that a Church which began to

exist in the sixteenth century as a distinct establishment is born fifteen hundred years too late to claim Christ as its founder. The myth of Continuity melts away before their common-sense view of the facts of history. The Church that possesses to-day the great cathedrals of England is not the Church that built them and worshipped in them for hundreds of years. We might, I say, take any one of these lines of argument. They all lead to Rome. But let us take that which most directly follows out the path we have pursued so far, and develop the thought that it is only in the Catholic Church we can have a sure faith in definite dogma.

The Protestant rule of faith is the Bible interpreted by each reader using his judgment to find out the meaning of what he reads. The Protestant theory bids one seek out God's message in the written Word of God, the Scriptures. When the Christian has read the message and understood it to the best of his ability he is to make his act of faith in the truth of what he has read.

This Protestant rule of faith is both insufficient and inefficient. It is insufficient, first, because it makes faith impossible for millions whom Christ came to save through faith. It was evidently an impossible rule for those who for centuries were unable to obtain copies of the Scriptures and who, even had they possessed copies, would have been

unable to read them. The invention of printing has enabled the Protestant of modern times to walk to Church on Sunday with his neatly bound English Bible under his arm; but must we deny faith to those who in the early stages of Christianity, having no Bibles of their own, learnt their religion from the living voice of a teaching Church? Must we exclude illiterates from the Kingdom of God because of their inability to read?

Reason asks whence do the Protestants know the inspiration of their Bible and its canonicity; whence have they learnt to trust that they have the whole Bible and nothing but the Bible within the binding of their book? Their Scriptures differ from the Scriptures in use in the Catholic Church. Nigh three hundred millions of the Christians in the world to-day condemn their Bible as incomplete and inaccurate. Does it bear witness to itself? Surely it needs something outside itself to bear testimony to its genuineness and entirety as God's Word and the whole of that Word. And even if it contain the whole of Christ's revelation, can the ordinary Christian pick out for himself a complete dogmatic Christianity from the Bible? There was good sense and humility in the reply of the Ethiopian eunuch to whom St. Paul addressed the question "Thinkest thou that thou understandest what thou readest in the Scriptures?" "How can I," was the

answer, "unless some man show me?" The book is so unlike a catechism religion, the parts of it are so evidently composed to meet the individual needs of those to whom they were primarily written, that it is hard to believe it was ever intended to be a manual of instruction in Christian doctrine.

The insufficiency of the Protestant principle is further proved by its admitted inefficiency in practice. Truth is one. Where contrary opinions exist one or other must lack the truth. What is the testimony of those who should know best as to the efficiency of the Bible alone as a rule of faith? If it has been successful, then we shall find that Protestants using this rule of faith are in agreement with each other on matters of belief. Are they "perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment," as St. Paul bids them, and "have they come to the unity of faith," or are they contrary to his command, "tossed about by every wind of doctrine"?

Why, within a few years of the birth of Protestantism and the introduction of this rule of faith, the leaders of the new party have to deplore the sad effects of their invention. "Our people," says Beza, a successor of Calvin, "are carried away by every wind of doctrine. If you know what their religion is to-day, you cannot tell what

it may be to-morrow. In what single point are these Churches which declared war against the Roman Pontiff agreed among themselves? You will hardly find anything affirmed by one which the other does not immediately exclaim against as impious." Calvin himself had already said: "It is of great importance that the divisions which subsist among us should not be known to future ages; for nothing can be more ridiculous than that we who have been compelled to make a separation from the whole world should have agreed so ill amongst ourselves from the very beginning of the reformation."

Have three and three-quarter centuries of Protestantism destroyed the promise of its childhood? Is it not clearer that each succeeding generation sees the birth of new sects with new doctrines which contradict those held by the others? Years ago *The Times* declared that "England alone is reputed to contain some seven hundred sects. Each of them proves a whole system of theology and morals from the Bible." The religion of the Church of England is declared by Lord Macaulay to be "a bundle of religious systems without number," "a hundred sects battling within a Church." The American philosopher, Dr. Brownson, tells us that "it is proverbial among the Unitarians that the Bible is like a fiddle on which

a skilful performer may play any tune he pleases."

The writer has listened to a sincere Mormon who was earnestly attempting to show that Mormonism was clearly revealed in the Scriptures. In one part of his exegesis, dealing with the text which speaks of the sin against the Holy Ghost, he solemnly declared that the sin in question was any doubt or denial of the truth of the revelation given through the testimony of the Spirit to Joseph P. Smith of Salt Lake City in the year 1827!

Doctrinal differences are the necessary outcome of private judgment and they make faith impossible, for faith is certain knowledge of revealed Truth, and Truth is one and undivided. Reason reminds us that where there is disagreement, all opinions may be false but all cannot be true. A Church that calmly contemplates doctrinal disunion and has no authority to decide between beliefs is not the teaching Church of Christ.

Some years ago when the late Cardinal Vaughan spoke of the divergence of view among Protestants the *Manchester Examiner* took him to task in the following words: "The very doctrinal dissensions to which the Bishop points are proofs of the self-consistency of Protestantism. These hundred separate and independent bodies are the direct

offspring of that practical assertion of the rights of conscience in which Protestantism consists. Protestantism becomes inconsistent with itself when it apes Popery by imposing fixed creeds and interdicting private judgment and pretending to be invested with divine authority to teach us what we are to believe. Protestantism is not a system of doctrine but a principle of free inquiry in matters of faith."

Yes: Protestantism is precisely this, and therefore Protestantism is not the Church of Christ. Reason has led us to accept a dogmatic Christianity; therefore reason bids us reject the Christianity offered through the Protestant rule of faith—the Bible alone, as interpreted by the individual private judgment.

Professor Harnack, viewing the result of the criticism of the Bible, says: "The theology of Protestantism in the sense of an infallible Bible doctrine has ceased to exist." What is true of faith is true of morality. "There is," says Mr. Mallock, "hardly any conceivable aberration of moral licence which has not in some quarter or another embodied itself into a rule of life and claimed to be the proper outcome of Protestant Christianity."

Turning from the Protestant rule to the Catholic principle of authority in belief, we shall see that reason approves it as the only effective security

for unity in faith and certainty in dogma. Christ said "Teach"—and the Catholic Church alone teaches effectively. Christ said "He that hears you hears Me, he that despises you despises Me"; "As the Father hath sent Me I also send you," and the Catholic Church alone of Christian bodies exhibits this divine dogmatism, speaking authoritatively to all in the name of Christ. Christ said: "The Spirit of Truth shall teach you all Truth and shall abide with you for ever"; "I am with you all days even to the end of the world," and the Catholic Church alone claims the infallibility which this promise involves.

Since the assent demanded in faith is absolute, unreserved, certain beyond all mere opinion or view, since it is part of our sure knowledge, reason demands that she who teaches us Christ's doctrine must be absolutely reliable and trustworthy. Now, a Church that could teach error is neither reliable nor trustworthy. God would be unjust if He demanded the absolute assent of our mind and yet left us unprotected from error in that assent. He would be commanding what is impossible. "I cannot be sure, I may be wrong, but I *think* this is Christ's message," are words that a fallible Church would use implicitly as a preface to each doctrine she proposed, and these words would destroy the possibility of faith.

The authority of an infallible revelation cannot be applied through a fallible medium. No chain is stronger than its weakest link, and the weight of certain faith cannot be supported by a mere probability that Christ's doctrine is being proposed to the Christian. Is there anything manifestly absurd in the promise Christ made to stand by His Church in her teaching office? Most of the difficulties against the infallibility of the Pope—for the Infallible Christian Church teaches that her Infallibility is focussed in her earthly Head and Ruler, the Successor of Peter—most of the difficulties are the result of a misunderstanding of the nature and limits of the Papal prerogative. The doctrine has been described as "preposterous," "irrational," "blasphemous," "antagonistic to the State," "incompatible with the duties of a citizen"; but it is the doctrine as misunderstood by the enemies of the Church.

If those who attack the Infallibility of the Pope had consulted the penny catechism or asked a Catholic schoolboy the meaning of the word we should not have such deplorable exhibitions of ignorance as we have witnessed in these attacks upon the Pope. We are told that evidently the Pope's claim is to be "omniscient," "omnipotent," "divine," "the Incarnate and Visible Word of God." Kingsley declared that the Pope claimed

power "to create right and wrong." Many have thought that Catholics are bound to believe that the Pope is impeccable—incapable of sin or fault. It is useless to continue an enumeration of these foolish and arbitrary interpretations of a word that is used in a definite technical theological sense. A Catholic child could have told them the truth had they consulted him.

The word means simply that the Pope is protected by the Divine assistance from teaching officially a false doctrine concerning faith or conduct to be held by the whole Catholic Church. The Pope may be ignorant of many matters; the Pope may make many mistakes; the Pope may commit sin—he has his confessor like every layman, priest, Bishop, and Cardinal who has a soul to save and temptations and human weakness to struggle against. As a private theologian he is not exempt from error. Only on those occasions when he acts officially defining doctrines of faith or morals authoritatively from the Chair of Peter is he guaranteed such Divine assistance as shall save him from teaching falsely in the name of Christ.

What more is needed? Could any less suffice to secure that Christ's Church might effectively perform her office and be the "pillar and foundation of Truth"? "I am with you all days"; "the

Spirit of Truth shall abide with you for ever." Here is Christ's promise.

Listen now to the Protestant account of how Christ kept His word. In the official homilies of the Church of England we read: "The clergy and laity, learned and unlearned, all ages and sects and degrees of men, women, and children of the whole of Christendom have been at once drowned in damnable idolatry and that for the space of eight hundred years and more." Dr. Chillingworth, the Protestant divine, declares that "the Church was corrupted universally." Another Protestant, Dr. Perkins, asserts that "an universal apostasy overspread the whole earth." They disbelieve the promise of Christ. "The gates of hell," they tell us, "*have* prevailed against His Church," the Spirit of Truth and He Himself have *not*—in spite of His promise—been with her. She has failed and is for ever untrustworthy. This is the judgment of Protestantism, but it is a judgment that gives the lie direct to Christ the Son of God.

The history of the Catholic Church is the history of success, not failure, in her teaching office. She has never had to go back on her official teaching; no progress of science, no advance in learning, has made it necessary for her to withdraw a doctrine she taught in earlier days. Her infallibility secures her against the phases of a moment, the fancies of

a particular age or place. Those who watch the signs of the times, those who know the history of the past, marvel at her vitality; and it is her infallibility that guarantees her life.

Science and philosophy and criticism and persecution tear in pieces the ephemeral doctrines of Protestantism but leave her untouched and unharmed. Matthew Arnold says: "I persist in thinking that Catholicism has a great future before it: that it will endure while all the Protestant sects dissolve and perish." "When we reflect on the tremendous assaults which the Catholic Church has survived," says Lord Macaulay, "we find it difficult to conceive in what way she is to perish."

But the Church is not to perish. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall *not* pass away," and the Catholic Church rests on the Word, the promise of Christ. The barque of Peter has weathered the storms hitherto. The waves of heresy have beaten on her and schism has torn away some of those whose safety depended on their clinging tight to her authority. Persecution has not availed to sink her. She has outlived the onset of a Godless science and prejudiced criticism. Calmly she forges ahead through the tempest. She has periods of fair weather and periods of foul, but she is safe to reach the shore of eternity, for He, the Master Pilot, who, more than man, con-

trols the winds and the waves, is with her ensuring her safety and that of those who remain true to her. She will not perish, for He is with her "all days even to the consummation of the world."

Reason shows us there is a God; Reason points to Christ our Divine Guide; Reason recognizes that Christ established a Church to teach Dogma, and finally Reason approves the infallibility of the Catholic Church as the only means of faith. Therefore the truest form of Rationalism is Catholicism.

Readers of this pamphlet are referred to the following useful publications dealing with the topics that form the subjects of the four chapters.

C.T.S. of Ireland. (24 *Upper O'Connell Street, Dublin.*)

Is there a God? By B. Gavan Duffy, S.J. 2d.

Was Christ God? By P. Finlay, S.J. 2d.

The Mystery of the Incarnation. By J. Canavan, S.J. 2d.

The Rule of Faith. By P. J. Cannon, S.J. 2d.

Is the Pope Infallible? By H. B. Loughnan, S.J. 2d.

Reason and Revelation. By J. J. MacSheahan, S.J. 2d.

Is there Salvation Outside the Church? By H. Kelly, S.J. 2d.

C.T.S. (72 *Victoria Street, London, S.W. 1.*)

The Church and Science. By Sir B. Windle, M.D., F.R.S. 7s. 6d.

The God of Philosophy. By Rev. F. Aveling, Ph.D., D.D. 2s.

Jesus Christ is God. By Pierre Courbet. 6d.

Personal Immortality. By Rev. R. Downey, D.D. 2d.

Intellectual Claims of the Catholic Church. By Sir B. Windle. 2d.

Authority. By Luke Rivington, D.D. 2s.

England's Breach with Rome. By Cardinal Gasquet. 1s.

How to Look for the True Church. By Rt. Rev. Bishop Vaughan. 2d.

The Religion of our Forefathers. By V. Hornyold, S.J. 6d.

Short History of the Catholic Church in England. By Cardinal Gasquet. 1s.

Burns Oates and Washbourne. (*Paternoster Row, London.*)

The Credentials of the Catholic Church. By Canon Bagshawe, D.D. 1s.

The Threshold of the Catholic Church. By Canon Bagshawe, D.D. 1s.

The Religion of the Plain Man. By R. H. Benson. 4s.

History of the Protestant Reformation. By W. Cobbett. Revised by Cardinal Gasquet. 2s. 6d.

Elements of the Christian Religion. By C. B. Dawson, S.J. 4s.

The Catechism Simply Explained. By Canon Cafferata. 1s. 6d.

Catholic Belief: An Exposition of Catholic Doctrine. 1s. 6d.

The Student's Catholic Doctrine. By Rev. C. Hart. 4s.

A Short Course of Catholic Instruction. By Bernard W. Kelly. 6d.

The Question Box. By Conway. 4s.

Sands and Co. (15 *King Street, Covent Garden, W.C.*)

Questions and Answers on the Catholic Church. Series I., 1s. Series II., 2s.

The Principles of Christianity. By A. B. Sharpe, M.A. 3s. 6d.

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15966